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And They Were There -- Reports of Meetings -- ARL National Conference and NEDCC Workshop

Editor

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format, as nothing more than a twenty-first century version of "vanity presses." Others think that the current publishing climate makes it more difficult than in the past to get published. With magazines, journals and publishers going out of business or being merged, book prices rising and mega-bookstores stocking primarily best sellers and turning over inventory weekly, many writers are looking to self-publishing as a way to get their material into the mix. Self-publishing is sometimes an option, but it's just as dicey in terms of commercial success as it was before.

ATG: *Would you care to give some examples of changing compensation problems with publishers (i.e., fewer advances, difficulty getting good accounting)? Can the average author make a living anymore? Has the Internet opened up new possibilities for compensation (i.e., lecturing, consulting, teaching, etc.)?*

TB: Publishers are giving fewer and smaller advances. Getting a good accounting and getting royalties paid on time have long been a problem for authors. Now, however, getting compensated when the publisher has sold the work to an online Web site or database is a bigger problem. Publishers think they have the right to sell the works, sometimes they even offer money to the author, but they don't unless that's set forth in a written agreement. Getting them to realize it and do something about it is difficult. Most authors just want to be paid. The first threat the publishers make, however, is always, "well, okay, if we can't have all the rights to your work we'll take it off the site".

Writers also rarely get either their rights back or money from a bankruptcy, since the bankruptcy courts that have control really don't understand copyright law for the most part.

ATG: *Could you discuss any issues regarding librarians pro or con (i.e., shared issues on censorship and reading promotion, but differences on copyright infringement and "fair use")? Should writers be compensated for books that circulate in libraries?*

TB: I personally don't know any writers who believe that royalties should be paid for books circulated in libraries, or re-sold in used book stores. I have heard over and over that authors are happy to have their work being read and believe every person who reads and finds value in a particular work will recommend it to friends and colleagues and look for the author's future work.

In fact, since writers are not the best compensated working people, they access libraries for their entertainment reading as well as using libraries extensively for research.

Libraries are a national resource, in fact, here in Western Massachusetts every little town has an exquisite library building where the librarians offer after school programs, summer reading programs and literacy projects.

Fair use by libraries, which is reasonably lenient under the copyright law, is not disputed by the NWU. Most libraries now have self-serve copying machines which make it possible for

individual users to violate the law by copying entire works. However, with most libraries under the gun financially, it would be unreasonable to expect librarians to remove those machines or police their use. At some point you have to believe in the goodness of people and learn to accept that those who wish to violate the law are going to find a way to do so.

It is important to note that current copyright law is being written to protect corporate holders of copyright. Corporations have introduced, promoted and pressed Congress to pass laws favorable to them, but not especially for the individual author.

ATG: *What's going on with Contentville, Copyright Clearance Center, etc?*


TB: Contentville went out of business, mainly because of copyright problems with writers. The Union is proceeding with its own royalty program — **Publishers Rights Clearinghouse**. A writer can register works and those wishing to post them to sites can get permission and pay a royalty through PRC. It works like ASCAP and BMI really.

ATG: *What does the Union think about Amazon selling used books? Do publishers share your opinion?*

TB: The NWU has no position, to the best of my knowledge, on **Amazon.com**. I personally wish that readers would shop at their independent new or used book stores. Access to small press books, books with small printing runs or with non-mainstream content will cease to be available (and possibly to even be published) without small, local independent store making them available to the consumers. I also believe, personally, that an integral part of the culture of literature, reading and enjoying the company of other lovers of books, is kept alive by the owners of used book stores who spend their lives recycling books and other reading material which would otherwise be forgotten, lost or sent to the landfill. (Disclaimer: my hus-

band owns and operates a used book store here in the Pioneer Valley of Massachusetts, as does the interviewer).

ATG: *What are some of the future plans, issues, projects for the Union?*

TB: The NWU is currently pursuing two major national campaigns. One is to get **AOL/Time-Warner** to offer fair contracts. The second is a legislative campaign. In the last Congress, **Representative John Conyers** of Michigan introduced a bill which would protect freelancers, including artists as well as authors, by allowing them to collectively bargain. This is a right we artists, writers and other creative independent contractors do not now have, because we are not traditional employees and do not create in a traditional "workplace" for the same employer. The struggle with **AOL/Time-Warner**, an entity which encompasses many publishers and other entertainment and intellectual companies (and growing all the time), underlines the need for the **Conyers Bill**, which will be reintroduced in the current legislative session. Currently, every writer negotiates separately with every publisher and editor. The power of writers as a collective bargaining unit would enhance their ability to protect their rights, including their right to make a living. 

Toni Brandmill is an activist for the National Writers Union, UAW Local 1981/AFL-CIO and serves as chairperson of her local unit, as a grievance officer and contract advisor, and as a national Trustee. In a former life she was a criminal defense attorney and she also practiced in the areas of family law and mediation. She lives in the Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts where she runs a used bookstore along with her husband, Bob. Toni is the mother of an eighteen year old daughter, Ayla. <tonibrandmill@attbi.com>.

And They Were There

Reports of Meetings — ACRL National Conference and NEDCC Workshop

Column Editor: **Sever Bordeianu** (University of New Mexico) <sbordeia@unm.edu>

Learning to Make a Difference

ACRL 11th National Conference, April 2003, Charlotte, North Carolina

Report by **Cassandra Osterloh** (University of New Mexico)

With record-breaking attendance, the **Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)** held its **11th National Conference** in Charlotte, North Carolina this past April. "*Learning to Make a Difference*" was this year's theme. With over 250 programs, workshops, and pre-conferences from which to choose the conference was both educational and invigorating. The conference theme was broad enough that every program seemed a

good fit and the sessions I attended were informative and interesting. There were a few troublesome points — too many good programs running concurrently and virtually no sessions in fields such as cataloging, acquisitions, special collections, or preservation. Reference, instruction, collection development, and technology, however, were areas well represented.

continued on page 99

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And They Were There *from page 98*

Keynote speaker **Paul Duguid**, a research specialist from the **University of California, Berkeley** addressed attendees on the library's role as a community and the librarians' relationships with their users. The luncheon keynote, **Bill Ferris**, former head of the **National Endowment for the Humanities**, spoke of the South and his love of libraries and librarians. He even brought along his guitar and serenaded the audience. The closing keynote speaker was **Belle Wheelan**, Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth of Virginia. She beseeched the audience to build on the strengths of one's institution and make the library a place to go for more reasons than just for an assignment.

There was the usual vendor maze with free food, drinks, and other goodies as well as roundtables available with assigned topics and moderators. Some of the topics addressed the assessment of library instruction, the pros and cons of paper and electronic journals, the use of technology in library instruction, how to deal with student employees, library services for distance education students, working with faculty on plagiarism issues, recruiting young library professionals, and coping with budget reductions. The one hundred roundtables (fifty at a time), unfortunately, were scheduled at the same time as presentations and lunch which made it difficult to participate.

The poster sessions, however, were scheduled during the free time reserved for viewing the exhibits and gave everyone a quick glimpse at projects

being done at various institutions. Some were very innovative (a virtual tour of new books with streaming video introductions by the author and interactive portions allowing students to ask questions of the author). Some were the usual suspects (this is how we do instruction — smile, teach to all learning styles, etc. or this is how we tested our Website — nothing new).

Since there were so many sessions and workshops from which to choose, I focused on teaching, learning, and technological issues while letting the others in my group attend different tracks. What follows are descriptions of some of the more outstanding sessions I attended.

One session that was very eye-opening was the session on making the library environment accessible. It demonstrated how reader software (i.e., JAWS, Window Eyes) talks through a Website and how important the setup of the page is for those using that software. The demonstration included a "bad" Website in which the software read through images with jumbled or meaningless names, tables that had no explanation for their purpose, and text-only options buried in the middle of the links and images. The "good" Website demo showed how proper placement of a text-only link or a skip to main content option can be less frustrating and less time consuming. It also demonstrated how proper ALT tags for both links and image names can lessen the frustration felt by the user. It is imperative we stay aware of how our Websites are viewed and used by all our users.



Three librarians from **New Mexico State University** presented the results of an interesting study in which they interviewed faculty who were heavy users of library instruction. They were asked why they thought the library was important and what they felt their students got out of the instruction.

The faculty felt that students lack basic library skills, the students need library instruction to be successful in their academic careers, the instruction helped to "combat" the Internet, and that the students needed to know how to evaluate information and develop critical thinking skills. In these interviews, the faculty also revealed why they went to a librarian to teach their students these skills because: the librarian is the expert, the faculty see themselves as lifelong learners (learning alongside their students), and the librarian is seen as an "expert-witness." The presentation provided interesting insight into how positively some faculty members view library instruction, the library, and the librarians.

There were also sessions on faculty-librarian collaborations and successful instruction endeavors. One such session from the **University of Michigan** presented a program about how the library collaborates with departments on campus such as the language resource center and the media department to put on an annual training sessions and discussions open to university faculty and staff on such topics as Web authoring, schol-

continued on page 100

And They Were There from page 99

arly communication, plagiarism, the invisible Web, searching specific databases, etc.

Overall, the conference programs and workshops were very informative. It was marvelous to be surrounded by all that creativity and ingenuity with the only drawback being the lack of time an individual had to attend all the sessions that were of interest.

Preservation Options In A Digital World: To Film or To Scan Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) Workshop, May 20-23, 2003, University of New Mexico

Report by **Sharon A. Moynahan** (University of New Mexico General Library)

Decision-making in today's rapidly changing library world is fraught with uncertainty. Technologies and laws change so rapidly that today's brilliant decision is tomorrow's embarrassing mistake. From May 20 through May 23, a group of fifty librarians, library specialists, technical support people, archivists, and museum curators gathered for a workshop at the **University of New Mexico**. Sponsored by the **Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC)**, the program, "*Preservation Options in a Digital World: To Film or To Scan*," featured experts in microfilming, digitization, program planning and the legal issues involved. While the majority of participants were from New Mexico and surrounding states, both coasts, the Midwest, and even New Zealand were represented.

The first day featured a summary of traditional microfilming and photographic reproduction used for preservation. **Steve Dalton**, Director, Field Service, for **NEDCC**, welcomed the participants and launched into a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of microfilming. Components of cost along with factors to be considered in selecting items to be filmed rounded out the discussion. During the late morning and early afternoon, **Wes Boomgaarden**, Preservation Officer of the **Ohio State University Libraries** examined the options for both microfilming and digitization

along with the decision-making process in selecting the best method for different types of collections. Costs, standards for quality, delivery options, copyright law, and finding aids were discussed as components of good decisions for successful projects. The day ended with a presentation by **Nancy Dennis**, Director of Collections and Technology Services for the **University of New Mexico**, describing New Mexico's successful statewide digitization initiative. Although packed with information, Day One would prove to be just a warm-up for Day Two, which featured a comprehensive look at digitizing, including selecting the items for preservation and the nuts and bolts of the technology involved. **Paul Conway**, Director of Information Technology Services at **Duke University**, presented what he felt participants "really needed to know" about the digital landscape and later discussed the infrastructure needed to support digital projects. In between his two presentations, **Steve Puglia**, a Consultant for **Image Constructors, LLC**, stretched most of the participants' comprehension of pixels, resolution, bit depth, color, and other specifications farther than they would have believed possible. By the end of the day, it was apparent that good decisions were in the future.

However, it wasn't really the end of the day. During the early evening, **Mary Minow**, Library Law Consultant, gave an overview of the legal

issues of microfilming and digitization. The fact that digitizing constitutes "republishing" would likely interfere with some plans in the works at participants' home institutions. International copyright agreements, changes in U.S. law, the **Bono** copyright extension act all impinge on the public domain, and add new challenges for librarians trying to stay within "fair use" guidelines. By the end of her presentation it was abundantly clear that the group had dozens of questions and not enough time. No one minded postponing dinner to the evening hours.

Day three was the **Paul Conway** show. He delved deeply into the relationship of producer, archive, and consumer. His discussion of the real costs of digitization projects (most of which are not connected to the actual imaging process) opened many eyes and probably caused some rethinking of projects in the works. Discussions of the move from "projects" (one-time initiatives, often grant funded) to a regular institutional program of preservation, as well as the costs of maintaining viable access in the face of constantly changing technology were comprehensive. Putting realistic budgets into grant proposals, with believable, well researched back-up data, was described as crucial to getting the outside funding that sustains most preservation projects.

Day four was a lagniappe aimed at the New Mexico institutions' projects for preserving the state's history. **Paul Conway**, **Mary Minow**, and **Steve Puglia** discussed the essentials of collaboration, again tackling technology choices, project management and legal issues.

Throughout the four days, innumerable sources for additional information were given to participants. It was soon apparent that, however extensive, this workshop was to be just the beginning of the learning process. Rather than suggesting a particular course to follow, the panelists prepared the fifty participants to examine the many options and factors involved in making good digital or microfilming preservation decisions. 🍷

Talk of the Trade

by **Barry Fast** (Deltabooks, 186 Cross Street, City Island, NY 10464; Phone: 718-885-9563) <barry0112@aol.com>

Oprah's Perfect Solution

Oprah Winfrey's wildly successful "Book Club" segment on her TV show made obscure authors famous, and propelled their novels to the top of the best seller lists. But **Pulitzer Prize** author **Jonathan Franzen** doomed the gravy train when he dissed **Oprah**, saying he'd refuse to have his book, *The Confessions*, included in her club because her selections were not up to his literary standards. To the consternation of publishers and book lovers, **Oprah** took this withering criticism to heart, announcing she would no longer feature books on her show. Now she's had a change of heart, but instead of risking more critical pronouncements from ungrateful authors, **Oprah** has come up with the perfect solution: Only dead authors will be featured on her show.

Academie Française Insists Gourmandise Must Wait Its Turn; Desperate French Petition Pope on Seven Deadly Sins

Even though the **Catholic Church** has downgraded the seven deadly sins to the venal sin category, a French pressure group sees no reason to feel the slightest tinge of guilt when indulging in their favorite pastime, eating. The problem is that the French dictionary, compiled by the

Academie Française, translates "gluttony" as "gourmandise." In fact, there is no precise English language equivalent of "gourmandise," which irritates French foodies—meaning practically everyone in France. They insist that this word exemplifies what is best about their food culture, a combination of "Athenian elegance, Roman luxury, and French delicacy" according to the eighteenth century food philosopher, **Brillat-Savarin**. The six other deadly sins (pride, avarice, lust, anger, envy and sloth) translate accurately into French, but a coalition of food societies and food writers complains that "gluttony" should be translated as "gloutonnerie," a more reproachful word. Led by historian **Jean-Francois Fayard**, they have demanded that the linguists who constantly revise and update the **Academie Française**-sponsored French dictionary, the official arbiter of the French language, immediately correct the flawed "gluttony"/"gourmandise" translation, substituting "gloutonnerie."

However, the **Academie Française** linguists are now working on words starting with the letter M, and they refuse to disrupt their alphabetically ordered revisions. It could be years before they arrive at words starting with G. **Mr. Fayard** and his cohorts, refusing to take no for an answer,

continued on page 101